

Hey guys, since the situation we originally brought to your attention in November has degraded (I'm fired, yay!), I wanted to write this doc up so you know explicitly who's at fault and what I've been dealing with.

Jack Boyd, president of the board, feels that I have threatened him with physical harm, to such a degree that he "fears for his own life". I have been informed that his anxiety and fear have reached such a level that he isn't sleeping at his own house, and has filed a police report against me. I was informed of this on November 5th, and have been trapped in a hellish cycle of gaslighting and abuse since then, where any attempt I make to resolve or to call out is met with silent indifference and (in some cases) outright anger.

This situation is as messed up and as shocking to me as I'm sure it is to you. I have in no way ever threatened anyone, and find the insinuation that I might do so absurd. I haven't spoken to Jack in months, and will note that this accusation only came to light when it became apparent that he wasn't going to be able to prevent me from joining the board otherwise. Despite my requests, no specific instances of this alleged behavior have been provided. I believe that the records I do have of my interactions with Jack is exonerating, along with my reputation as a decent human being.

To be clear, I regularly butted heads with Jack. We disagreed on the freedom and flow of information, how to utilize the NDA, and the importance of the ED position vs. the rest of the office. In discussions I have been snippy, but I have never said anything that could be even remotely construed as threatening. However, I'm told that my tone, in combination with some "verbal incident" from last year was enough for him to feel that I intended to cause him physical harm. Not once did Jack approach me with this concern himself, or send someone else to raise it. Not once did the board attempt to temper this situation or intervene before banning me was the only option Jack could agree with.

As far as I am aware, this concern appeared in October (months following any of the alleged threats) and was immediately followed by the board's intent to ban me from the event and from staff, without following any of our clearly established procedures. Once they received some pushback, they walked it back to barring me from joining the board and giving me the option of attempting mediation with Jack. I requested mediation, but was subsequently given the runaround and rejected. Jack opted to instead file a report to Safe and a report to the police. My last correspondence with Jack was on October 29th, 7 days before my meeting with Joel, PB, and Eli. I have made no attempt to communicate with him since, for fear that it would be considered harassment. *Screenshots attached at the end of the document.*

After that, I started talking to people, and realized that these incidents were not isolated. Jack, Joel, and Eli are out of control, and PB is their moronic attack dog. Jack has systematically attacked and plotted against anyone who he considers a threat to the board's absolute control of MAGFest. While I was trying to handle this situation in good faith, EJJ strung me along and made clumsy public statements (see PB's statement from MAGCon: <https://youtu.be/9DfA2Ze31xU>). It's hard to try to fix something while the other side attempts to

assassinate your character with all the finesse of a teenager undoing a bra. It was at MAGCon that the group who became the Friends of MAGFest decided to go public with our experiences.

That's the story between November 5th and November 19th. A lot happened between then and now, (such as Dom, Paul, and Tresch trying to back us up) but suffice it to say, the EJJ wasn't willing to back down on any of our requests, and has been waiting for a good time to fire myself, Ian, Shir, and Debra, who they see as the primary instigators in this situation. This document is a mess, because I put it together in the 3 hours between being told I'm being fired and actually being fired.

I love you all, I'm sorry it had to end this way, and I hope to see you all some time other than now. After 7 long years of loving this community, I'm getting yeeted by a crazy guy and his buddies. I'm really tired. If you want to talk to me, hit me up on discord at outlaw#4188.

Documentation is available here:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1QmP7rQqpnMNt_zbpaAcokMm7zvbrjPVe?usp=sharing


It includes:


- Screenshots of my interactions with Jack since the election.
- A call log showing when I spoke with him on the phone, included when I last spoke to him on the phone.
- Full slack logs of the #board and #bod-peanut-gallery channels.
- A transcript (provided by Bunny) of the Nov. 5th meeting in which I was informed of Jack's allegations against me.


Additional documentation available by request. Specifically referenced screenshots are copied below.

Last Correspondance:

Thursday, October 29th ▾

**outlaw** 6:45 PM
Do you know what's going on with [REDACTED]? I hadn't heard anything, but her message earlier today sounds like she's got a lot.

**Jack** 6:51 PM
I think it's [REDACTED]. He has to have around the clock care I believe and he's having health problems, but I'm not sure about what's up recently.

**outlaw** 6:53 PM
Oh, that sucks. I'm fine waiting another week if she needs it.

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Board Runaround:



Josiah Tillett <josiah.tillett@magfest.org>
to eli, Joel, bunny ▾

Fri, Nov 6, 3:28 PM ☆ ↩ ⋮

Eli,

I wanted to follow up and request that meeting summary whenever possible. I additionally recall that Bunny took notes, if it's possible to get a copy of those I'd appreciate it.

Thanks,
Josiah Tillett



Eli Courtwright eli@courtwright.org via gmail.com
to me, Eli, Joel, bunny.smith@magfest.org ▾

Fri, Nov 6, 3:37 PM ☆ ↩ ⋮

Sure thing, I'm still at work and have a church thing tonight, but I'll definitely be able to get those to you tomorrow.

- Eli



Eli Courtwright eli@courtwright.org via gmail.com
to me, Eli, Joel, bunny.smith@magfest.org ▾

Fri, Nov 6, 6:57 PM ☆ ↩ ⋮

Josiah,

No notes yet (though we'll definitely be able to send them tomorrow), but I talked to Jack, and he'd like to move forward by having a mediation session with you.

He thought that a good group of people to be present that would make everyone feel as comfortable and supported as possible would be you+him (obviously) along with myself and Mark Murnane. I believe that his suggestion of Mark was both because Mark is a friend of yours who could help support you during the meeting, and also because Mark was present during one of the incidents. However, if you have different preferences for which group of people you'd prefer to be present, please suggest some alternative and we can work together to find a group that's best for everyone. Please let us know what works for you.

Here's a when2meet for the next few weeks:
<https://www.when2meet.com/?10287933-vJVw6>

Let us know if you have any questions.

- Eli



Eli Courtwright eli@courtwright.org via gmail.com
to me, Eli, Joel, bunny.smith@magfest.org ▾

Sat, Nov 7, 11:26 PM ☆ ↩ ⋮

Josiah,

Here's a copy of the notes from our meeting:
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1yYGV1RpGjZdKSDT7Qsi7buiYZuMIU4VaNWqjceyZteY/edit>

Many thanks to Bunny for taking them and to Joel for doing the initial editing. Also many thanks to you, Josiah, for responding so constructively during the meeting itself.

- Eli





Josiah Tillett <josiah.tillett@magfest.org>
to Eli, Eli, Joel, bunny.smith@magfest.org ▾

Sun, Nov 8, 5:42 PM ☆ ↩ ⋮

Eli,

Thanks for the notes!

I know time is of the essence before MAGCon, but if there's no chance that this mediation will allow me to take my nominated seat, I'd like to suggest that you offer it to Shir and offer Shir's seat to Carrie Snyder, who came in third place in the election this year. That way the board came uphold it's promise to add two elected members, and can still respect the election process to some extent.

You don't have to discuss it in any depth with me, but I'd like to advocate for it.



Eli Courtwright eli@courtwright.org via gmail.com
to me, Eli, Joel, bunny.smith@magfest.org ▾

Mon, Nov 9, 1:23 AM ☆ ↩ ⋮

Josiah,

Thanks for the feedback. We definitely realize that this is a topic which needs a decision, but we haven't had time to convene a special meeting to do so prior to the Sunday Board meeting on MAGCon weekend. So instead we're going to call a special meeting on Sunday, November 29th specifically devoted to the topic of "who gets that second Board slot", and we'll let people know about this upcoming special meeting and its topic during the public Board meeting next weekend. That's also when we expect to announce our decision not to add you to the Board - I mention that because I originally indicated that this might be announced sooner, so I wanted to make sure you know what to expect.

(As for Carrie specifically being added: I don't know where every Board member stands on this question, but I personally think your suggestion has a lot of merit, and I intend to advocate for adding Carrie. That's not part of our public announcement, but I wanted you to know that your recommendation will be represented at the Nov 29th special meeting on this topic.)

Thanks also for filling out the when2meet. I talked to Jack tonight, and he's decided to unplug from MAGFest for the rest of this week for some much needed R&R. Jack plans to delay reading MAGFest emails, avoid attending meetings, and not participate in Slack (he said he'd probably delete Slack from his phone) until the start of MAGCon.

This has two implications relevant to you:

- 1) You should expect to hear back about the mediation after MAGCon - I think I originally indicated that we'd be able to schedule that by around now, but I believe Jack taking this time off for R&R will be beneficial for everyone involved.
- 2) You don't need to avoid any meetings or Slack conversations this week, even if they might have otherwise involved Jack. We appreciate how conscientious and respectful you've been of those boundaries since we spoke on Thursday. But since Jack will not be participating in Slack this week, you won't need to worry about e.g. wading into conversations that might have ended up pulling in a Board member such as Jack and thus putting two of you into a direct interaction before you'd had a chance to have a mediation session.

Thank you again for your understanding and cooperation. Please let me know if you have any questions or want to follow up about anything.

- Eli



Eli Courtwright eli@courtwright.org via gmail.com
to me, Eli, Joel, bunny.smith@magfest.org ▾

Sun, Nov 15, 2:52 PM ☆ ↩ ⋮

Josiah,

Two updates:

- 1) Jack has returned from his break and filled out the when2meet. It looks like the best shared availability is this coming Wednesday at 6pm. If that still works for you, then I'll put that on the calendar. Jack has suggested me as a mediator, and I am also available at that time. Jack has also said that you're welcome to bring Mark if that would help. If you'd rather have someone other than me and/or someone other than Mark, then please let me know ASAP and we can work out a set of people that will make everyone feel as supported as possible - Faith has offered to help by being there, so that's definitely a possibility. Regardless I'll put something on the calendar.
- 2) Due to some unforeseen circumstances we've had to push back the public Board meeting that was originally scheduled for today. This was the meeting where we were planning on announcing that Shir was getting the 2-year slot on the Board and that we'd be having a called meeting to discuss the second opening. The delay means that we won't be announcing anything until that next meeting, which is why I wanted to give you a heads up before the announcement went out. (On a related note, we noticed and much appreciated your sensitive response in Slack yesterday when the question of the nominated members came up.) I'm sorry for the additional delay in this.

- Eli



Josiah Tillet <josiah.tillet@magfest.org>
to Eli, Faith, Eli, Joel, bunny.smith@magfest.org

Nov 16, 2020, 2:49 PM ☆ ↩ ⋮

Hi Eli,

6PM on Wednesday works for me. I've asked Faith to join us, since facilitating volunteer mediations is a part of her responsibilities. Since some of my own grievances about this include being misquoted or having a turn of phrase brought against me later, I will be recording the meeting for transcribing and reference. I can agree to the restriction that it only gets shared to people present in the call, but taking the recording itself is non-negotiable for me at this point.

Additionally, I have to submit my offense and object to how PB handled announcing the postponement yesterday, it went completely contrary to what you told me was going to happen in our meeting on the 5th. As one of the two nominees, I've had to field questions from volunteers about what's going on and have already had to defend my reputation to others. Furthermore, implying that this issue is a safe case after we had already agreed to mediation was an outright lie.

On a less formal note: Guys, what are you doing? You're lashing out at some genuinely good volunteers and have seriously damaged my trust in you. Every step of this process has circumvented the correct channels to deal with these things, and I don't think the association with the board is a good enough reason to bypass Safe or our volunteer coordinator, both of whom have had nothing but questions about what's going on when they should be leading us towards a resolution. I'm not really in a position to make an impassioned plea, but your experiences with the other times you circumvented process have to remind you of how messy things can get if you're not careful. I want to work this out with you guys, but the more time goes on, the more likely it feels that I'm going to be unceremoniously fired, and this time I won't be around to help manage the community response.

Regards,
Josiah Tillet



Eli Courtwright eli@courtwright.org via gmail.com
to me, Eli, Joel, bunny.smith@magfest.org, Faith

Nov 17, 2020, 2:52 AM ☆ ↩ ⋮

Josiah,

Responding slightly out-of-order.

W.r.t. the announcement of the Board meeting being delayed, you're right to be upset - I told you that we'd handle this differently than what ended up happening. I don't have the time or ability to go into more details tonight, but I apologize and am as much personally responsible for how that ended up as anyone. I owe you an explanation (which will merely explain not excuse anything) and I hope to be able to find time to do that reasonably soon.

As for the mediation with Jack - I talked to Jack tonight to finalize the plans, and he told me that he has decided not to attempt mediation with you at this time. My impression is that it's something he wants to do at some point, but not anytime soon, i.e. sometime in 2021 at the earliest.

With that being said, while the mediation would have been between you and Jack, I was planning on being present as much to support you as to support Jack. I still consider you a friend, and I don't want to effectively stop talking to you now that you're no longer a Board nominee. I also owe you at least some amount of explanation of at least some parts of what's been going on. With all of that in mind... do you still want to meet? Like with just me? Or me and Faith? Or me and other Board members of your choosing, with or without Faith? Recorded or un-recorded, whatever you prefer. And not necessarily this Wednesday (honestly I'm pretty slammed this week so a different day would probably work better for me anyway, though if you'd like to meet sooner then I'll definitely make the time for you). I respect you and value your opinion and while I might be literally unable to give a straightforward answer to "what are you doing" I actually would like, at some point, to talk over how all of this went, both from my personal perspective and from yours.

- Eli
